Gifted Education Resource Guide

Montana
Office of Public Instruction
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Foreword

This publication has been prepared to assist districts in developing and implementing effective programs for gifted and talented students as required by accreditation standard 10.55.804 (Appendix A). This office, along with the Montana Gifted Education Advisory board and the publication's principal author, Sue Kidd, are providing Montana educators with a series of research-based, best practice publications.

As we seek to improve educational practices in our schools, we must not only raise the base level of expectations for all, but also expand at the top to allow capable students to go beyond and reach their potential. This series of publications will assist districts in raising the "ceiling as well as the floor."

The program for the gifted and talented should reinforce and be compatible with other programs within the same institution.
—Sandra N. Kaplan, Providing Programs for the Gifted and Talented. 1974, Ventura, Ca., Leadership Training Institute.

Prologue

Educators are now rethinking and redesigning our educational systems. There are advocates for Outcome-Based Education, Total Quality Management in Education, Site-Based Management, Heterogeneous Grouping, Authentic Assessment, Cooperative Learning, and Distance Learning. Each of these ideas give us new insights into the educational process. Some of them have real merit, others may be just tinkering with the system. We must remember our mission: to educate our children. It is time to review our basic philosophy and to use sound principles of learning to redesign systems and address student needs.

Developers of programs for high-ability learners must remember that our programs are part of the total educational system. We must be willing to sit down at the table with our fellow citizens to develop the plan to educate our students—all of our students. We must be willing to fight for the programs and services that can be demonstrated to work for our high ability learners and to let go of those that do not.

In our quest to develop programs where high-ability students can be challenged to reach their potential, it is appropriate to consider the derivation of the word "intelligence" and to measure our programs against it.

"Intelligence is derived from two words—inter and legere—inter meaning 'between' and legere meaning 'to choose.' An intelligent person, therefore, is one who has learned 'to choose between.' He knows that good is better than evil, that confidence should supersede fear, that love is superior to hate, that gentleness is better than cruelty, forbearance than intolerance, compassion than arrogance, and that truth has more virtue than ignorance."

—J. Martin Klotsche

Reform: Like trying to repair an airplane in full flight with all of us aboard.
—Eve. M Bither, Director Programs for the Improvement of Practice. U. S. Dept. of Education

Providing a quality education to meet the needs of all our children is an exemplary goal of the community, the state, and the nation. This manual is an attempt to bring the latest thinking and research in educational programming to help you and your community design or renew your program. This manual focuses on the particular needs of the high-ability student (in some areas called the Gifted/Talented student) but with the view that the programming for these students is only a part of the continuum of educational possibilities for all students.

We are also aware that communities differ in some ways but also share many similarities. This manual is designed to guide all types of communities, whether they are small or large, rural, urban or suburban. The focus of this manual is on developing a program to meet the needs of high-ability learners from kindergarten through high school graduation.

Who should be part of the process of developing a program?

What part should or could they play?

Providing a quality education to meet the needs of all our children is an exemplary goal of the community, the state, and the nation.

1. **District Commitment:** the district commits to developing and implementing program.

   √ MANAGEMENT BY OBJECTIVES: *TMMMA*

   It is essential that you review the necessary elements needed for program success. They are:

   Time— To develop, implement, inservice, and assess.

   Money— For staff, staff development and materials.

   Manpower— To develop, implement, and carry out programming.

   Management— Skills and staff to manage programming.

   Authority— To develop, implement, and carry out programming.

All successful programs must consider these factors. You may need to be creative, but you must make provisions for each of them.

2. **The Steering Committee:** an ongoing committee whose major functions are to oversee the development and function of the district program and to advocate for the program (approximately 10-15 interested people).

   √ Consists of a broad base of community members, each representative of a portion of the community and the school district's resources and

interests.

Included might be:

- classroom teachers representing each of the levels in the district
- administrators
- school psychologists
- counselors or social service representatives
- parents
- school board representative
- gifted student advocates
- business and/or professional representative (could be through the local Chamber of Commerce)
- civic representative (could be from a local service club)
- students (male and female, middle and/or high school)
- teachers with an interest/training in gifted education

This is the objective of the whole enterprise: to design a program that will successfully address the issues that created a need for it in the first place.
—Borland, James H., 1989, p.49

√ Responsibilities of the steering committee

- become knowledgeable of the needs of high-ability students and best practices in their education
- write the program philosophy statement
- set program goals
- oversee, monitor and validate the work of the planning committee
- develop a time line for program development, implementation, and evaluation
- act as an advocate in the community

3. **Planning Committee:** a short-term committe whose task is to develop the district's program. The committee may be made up of members of the Steering Committee and/or other interested individuals.

√ Responsibilities of the committee:

- complete a needs assessment
  What do we have? What do we need?
- define the population to be served
- devise the identification process
- develop the program options and levels of service
- provide for inservice training on:
  —characteristics and identification of high-ability students
  —current best practices

—curriculum differentiation
- program options and levels of service
- design and conduct the program assessment and renewal
- act as advocates in the school and community

The first task of the planning committee is to conduct the needs assessment. This is an assessment of the programming options that are available and appropriate in the present system, perceived program needs of the district and perceptions about gifted students. The needs assessment should address the following topics:

Issues related to those who are the gifted. For example:

√ Can gifted students be gifted in only one subject area or is the perception that gifted students are gifted in all areas?

√ What percentage of the school population should be identified as gifted?

√ Should gifted education include the art and music areas or is it limited to academics?

The first task of the planning committee is to conduct the needs assessment.

Issues related to programming for the gifted.

√ How can the program facilitate students progressing through the curriculum at a faster rate?

√ How can the program facilitate independent learning and mentorships?

√ How should highly creative students be accommodated by the program?

√ How should non-motivated, high-potential students be accommodated in the program?

√ What are the responsibilities of teachers who work with gifted students?

Issues about current school programing.

Does the present educational program provide:

√ a strong general curriculum to establish a foundation upon which excellence can be built

√ appropriate academic pacing (flexible pacing including acceleration)

√ opportunities to develop in-depth studies

√ experiences in critical and creative thinking, problem solving and decision making

√ opportunities to recognize and develop relationships among various disciplines

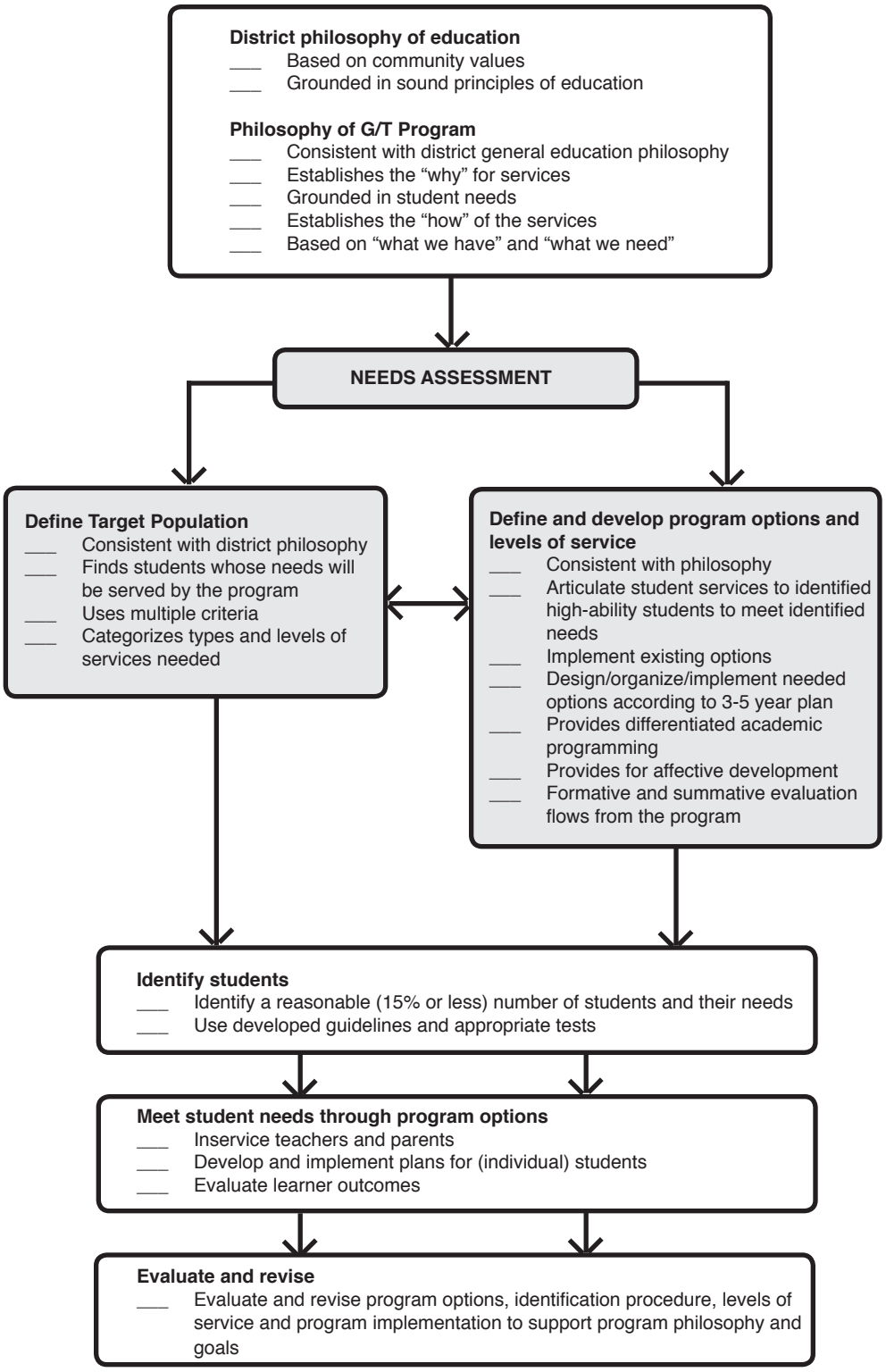
- √ opportunities to relate to, and interact with, other high-ability students
- √ appropriate counseling services (personal, college, and career)
- √ opportunities to develop independence, self-direction and discipline in learning

Issues related to current services should be addressed if a district program currently exists and is being renewed through this process.

- √ How challenging is the course work in the current program?
- √ How challenging is the course work in the general school program?

Questionnaires should be developed and distributed to parents of currently identified gifted students, parents of prior identified gifted students, parents of high ability but not yet identified students, identified gifted students, students enrolled in honors or higher-level high school classes, all administrators, randomly selected teachers K-12, all counselors, psychologists and other interested community members. This information provides the basis around which programming for high-ability students will be developed. (See Appendix B for an example of a needs assessment from Great Falls Public Schools.)

The Flow Chart on the following page can help give direction to your program development.



Questionnaires should be developed and distributed to parents of currently identified gifted students, parents of prior identified gifted students, parents of high ability but not yet identified students, identified gifted students, students enrolled in honors or higher-level high school classes, all administrators, randomly selected teachers K-12, all counselors, psychologists and other interested community members.

Flow Chart Checklist for Program Development

In this chapter, we are developing an administrative response to the needs of high-ability students. Our best programs will be rooted in theory but designed to meet the specific needs of our high-ability students in our individual districts. We might think of the theoretical model as a ball sitting on a shelf. It is obviously a ball but it doesn't *do* anything. The ball becomes the administrative model when it is used in a real game and bounces, scores points and really *does* something.

A Brief Look at Theory

Exemplary educational systems are always grounded in sound principles; however, there is always a need for **RE**vision, **RE**newal, and **RE**formation in the administration of our educational programs to **RE**align our programs with our chosen principles.

Perhaps the best framework of "learner-centered principles" is a collaboration between the American Psychological Association (APA) and the Mid-Continent Regional Educational Laboratory (McREL). This new publication (1993) is an extensive project developed and reviewed by the top psychologists, educators, professionals in various scientific disciples, and also a wide range of professional groups. These principles can act as guidelines for educational reform and school redesign.

What are these sound principles of education?

Metacognitive and Cognitive Factors

Principle 1: *The nature of the learning process.* Learning is a natural process of pursuing personally meaningful goals, and it is active, volitional, and internally mediated; it is a process of discovering and constructing meaning from information and experience, filtered through the learner's unique perceptions, thoughts, and feelings.

Principle 2: *Goals of the learning process.* The learner seeks to create meaningful, coherent representations of knowledge regardless of the quantity and quality of data available.

Principle 3: *The construction of knowledge.* The learner links new information with existing and future-oriented knowledge in uniquely meaningful ways.

Principle 4: *Higher-order thinking.* Higher-order strategies for "thinking about thinking"—for overseeing and monitoring mental operations—facilitate creative and critical thinking and the development of expertise.

Affective Factors

Principle 5: *Motivational influences on learning.* The depth and breadth of information processed and what and how much is learned and remembered are influenced by (a)self-awareness and beliefs about personal control, competence, and ability; (b) clarity and saliency of personal values, interests, and goals; (c) personal expectations for success or failure; (d) affect, emotion, and general state of mind; and (e) the resulting motivation to learn.

Principle 6: *Intrinsic motivation to learn.* Individuals are naturally curious and enjoy learning, but intense negative cognitions and emotions (e.g., feeling insecure, worrying about failure, being self-conscious or shy, and fearing corporal punishment, ridicule, or stigmatizing labels) thwart this enthusiasm.

Principle 7: *Characteristics of motivation-enhancing learning tasks.* Curiosity, creativity, and higher-order thinking are stimulated by relevant, authentic learning tasks of optimal difficulty and novelty for each student.

Developmental Factors

Principle 8: *Developmental constraints and opportunities.* Individuals progress through stages of physical, intellectual, emotional, and social development that are a function of unique genetic and environmental factors.

Personal and Social Factors

Principle 9: *Social and cultural diversity.* Learning is facilitated by social interactions and communication with others in flexible, diverse (in age, culture, family background, etc.), and adaptive instructional settings.

Principle 10: *Social acceptance, self-esteem, and learning.* Learning and self-esteem are heightened when individuals are in respectful and caring relationships with others who see their potential, genuinely appreciate their unique talents. and accept them as individuals.

Individual Differences

Principle 11: *Individual differences in learning.* Although basic principles of learning, motivation, and effective instruction apply to all learners (regardless of ethnicity, race, gender, physical ability, religion, or socioeconomic status), learners have different capabilities and preferences for learning mode and strategies. These differences are a function of environment (what is learned and communicated in different cultures or other social groups) and heredity (what occurs naturally as a function of genes).

Exemplary educational systems are always grounded in sound principles; however, there is always a need for REvision, REnewal, and REformation in the administration of our educational programs to REalign our programs with our chosen principles.

Principle 12: *Cognitive filters.* Personal beliefs, thoughts, and understandings resulting from prior learning and interpretations become the individual's basis for constructing reality and interpreting life experiences.

—Mid-Continent Regional Educational Laboratory, January 1993

These principles have direct implications to the programs we design for our students. Many current programs for high-ability students are rooted in these principles and have proven their worth. It is vital that we keep them in mind as we develop, REdesign and REnew our programs.

Exemplary educational systems are always grounded in sound principles; however, there is always a need for re/vision, re/newal, and re/formation in the administration of our educational programs to re/align our programs with our chosen principles.

For further information on program development:

Borland, James H.; Planning and Implementing Programs for the Gifted, Teachers College Press, 1989

Davis, Gary A. and Sylvia B. Rimm; Education of the Gifted and Talented; second edition, Prentice Hall; 1989

Feldhusen, John F., Steven M. Moover and Michael F. Sayler; Identifying and Educating Gifted Students at the Secondary Level; Trillium Press, 1990

Long, Margo; Rural Programs for Gifted and Talented Students; Whitworth College, Center for Gifted Education, Spokane, Washington

The Curriculum Process Guide, Montana Office of Public Instruction, Jan Cladouhos Hahn, 1990

Chapter 2

Philosophy

A philosophy is the foundation of any program. *Your* program philosophy is the base upon which all else must rely. The philosophy of your program for high-ability learners must be built on, and aligned with (integrated into), your district's adopted philosophy for the education of all students.

The philosophy provides the rationale (the why) for developing and implementing appropriate programs for high-ability students. To develop the rationale, consider:

√ Who are the high-ability students?

√ What are their unique needs?

√ How are their needs different from other learners?

√ How can we meet these needs?

Remember that the answers to the basic questions will be the foundation for your program. We will now consider each of them briefly.

We came with VISION, not with sight.
—Wendall Berry

Who are the high-ability students?

Many theories about "giftedness" or high-ability students have been developed. However, the definition developed as part of the 1978 federal report known as the "Marland Report" is most widely used.

(The gifted and talented are)"...children and, whenever applicable, youth who are identified at the pre-school, elementary, or secondary levelS as possessing demonstrated or potential abilities that give evidence of high performance capability in areas such as intellectual, creative, specific academic or leadership ability or in the performing and visual arts, and who by reason thereof require services or activities not ordinarily provided by the school." (U.S. Congress, Educational Amendments of 1978 [P.L. 95-561, IX(A)])

A 1993 review of that definition has resulted in an updated definition of who gifted children are.

> *"Children and youth with outstanding talent perform or show the potential for performing at remarkably high levels of accomplishment when compared with others of their age, experience, or environment.*
>
> *These children and youth exhibit high performance capability in intellectual, creative, and/or artistic areas, possess an unusual leadership capacity, or excel in specific academic fields. They require services or activities not ordinarily provided by the schools.*
>
> *Outstanding talents are present in children and youth from all cultural groups, across all economic strata, and in all areas of human endeavor."*
>
> *NATIONAL EXCELLENCE: THE CASE FOR DEVELOPING AMERICA'S TALENT, U.S. Department of Education, Office of Education Research and improvement, October 1993.*

By failing to prepare, you are preparing to fail.
—Ben Franklin

For purposes of the education of high-ability students, they are those students in a given school or school district who are exceptional by virtue of markedly greater-than-average potential or ability in some area of human activity generally considered to be the province of the educational system and whose exceptionality engenders special educational needs that are not being met adequately by the regular core curriculum. (Borland, 1989, p. 52)

This definition is based on the student's need for educational programming to enable each student to reach his/her full potential. In general, gifted students need curriculum and services that vary the depth, breadth, complexity and pace of instruction due to their ability to learn at faster rates, deal with high levels of abstraction, and make associations other children would not be able to make. Educational needs are not always academic. These students also have social and emotional needs that should be addressed at all levels. In addition, at the secondary level these students have special needs for a variety of experiences in cultural and career education, as well as special counseling services. (Feldhusen, 1990; p. 19)

How can we meet these needs?

Your program can meet the needs of high-ability learners by assuring that the programs you develop are:

- grounded on a firm philosophical base that is agreed upon and supported by the community
- rooted in the principles of sound educational practice
- aligned with and integrated into the educational program for all students in the community
- qualitatively differentiated from the regular program (varied in depth, breadth, complexity and pace)

The following are four sample philosophy statements. It is vitally important that your committee develop its own statement of philosophy and definitions which reflect local needs and values. The local development of these components build crucial local ownership. Without ownership, the program's success could be endangered.

It is vitally important that your committee develop its own statement of philosophy and definitions which reflect local needs and values.

These are the foundations to which you will return for evaluation and renewal.

Fundamental to the basic ideals of a democratic society is the belief in the intrinsic worth of each individual citizen. To ensure the maintenance and improvement of the quality of life in such a society, it is essential to provide educational opportunities for each individual to maximize his/her potential. Thus, society, by providing for the growth of the individual, will in turn reap the benefits. For the minority of children at the upper end of the mental ability continuum, the regular education program is inappropriate. The needs, interests, and readiness of these pupils combine to form a mismatch with programs which are relevant for their more average age-mates. They require special educational considerations to more fully realize their potential.

(adapted from State of California and Nebraska

Programs must be grounded on a firm philosophical base that's agreed upon and supported by the community.

The Aurora Public Schools are dedicated to meeting the needs of every student. In a democratic society, which seeks to offer educational opportunities appropriate to each child's ability, it is necessary to provide for the unique needs of the gifted and talented (high-ability learner).

(The gifted and talented) are those pupils whose abilities, talents, and potential for accomplishment are so outstanding that they require a variety of special provisions in addition to the usual curriculum to meet their educational needs.

The purpose of the AGATE program is to provide the academically gifted/talented student with extensions for learning which provide a variety of educational experiences beyond those normally provided. Enhancing the self as a learner and as a producer is of primary concern. Activities, opportunities, and programs are thus structured to assist the student in assessing the capabilities upon the unique abilities, talents, interests, and needs which represent him/her as a "self."

(Aurora, Colorado)

Appropriate gifted programs are based on a belief that excellent education for the gifted will result in excellence in our society. This premise is part of a foundation upon which these guidelines are built.

* *The belief in equal opportunity of education for all, according to individual ability and need, so that each student may have his/her potential challenged to a high degree.*

* *The belief that this equal opportunity is necessary and good for both the individual and society.*

* *The belief in the development of differential programs and the flexibility in the implementation thereof to provide for individual differences in regard to intellectual, social, and emotional abilities.*

* *The belief that the student should be able to engage in educational experiences that both provide a firm foundation in knowledge accumulated to date and enable that existing knowledge to serve as a basis for creativity, innovation and invention.*

(continued)

These guidelines reflect Pennsylvania's continuing commitment to provide a free, appropriate, public education for the mentally gifted consistent with their individual needs and outstanding abilities.

The XYZ Public School has the responsibility to provide services that meet the needs of all students to develop their potential.

Highly capable students have special needs created by their high degree of sensitivity, wide range of interests, advanced verbal and academic skills, rapid rate of learning, and a greater capability for higher-level thinking. Intellectual, academic, and creative talents can paradoxically be a handicap in an educational situation designed to meet the needs of the majority of students.

XYZ School is committed to providing these students with a learning environment flexible enough to allow a diversity of options in order to maximize their potential.

The Extended Studies program will provide support and resources to teachers, students and parents.

It is vitally important that your committee develop its own statement of philosophy and definitions which reflect local needs and values.

Chapter three provides information about theories and definitions of giftedness are helpful to consider in the development of the philosophy statement.

See Appendix C for a sample school board policy that elaborates upon the philosophy statement.

Borland, James H.; Planning and Implementing Programs for the Gifted, Teachers College Press, New York, 1989

Colorado State Advisory Committee for Gifted and Talented Student Education, "Toward Principles Governing Outcomes, Learning Tasks, and Performance Standards for Gifted and Talented Learners," Colorado State Board of Education, June 1992

Davis, Gary A. and Sylvia B. Rimm; Education of the Gifted and Talented, Prentice Hall, New Jersey, 1989

Dettmer, Peggy; "Purposes and Programs for the Gifted," Kansas State University, 1983

Feldhusen, John F., Steven M. Hoover and Micheal F. Sayler; Identifying and Educating Gifted Students at the Secondary Level, Trillium Press, Monroe, New York, 1990

Maker, C. June; "Intelligence and Creativity in Multiple Intelligences: Identification and Development," Educating Able Learners, Fall 1992

Spady, William G. and Kit J. Marshall; "Beyond Traditional Outcome-Based Education," Educational Leadership, October 1991

VanTassel-Baska, Joyce, "Educational Reform: Issues, Concerns, and Implications for Gifted Education," paper delivered to Iowa Talented and Gifted Conference, October 1992

Programs must be qualitatively differentiated from the regular program (varied in depth, breadth, complexity and pace).

Chapter 3

Theories and Definitions of Giftedness

A systems approach or administrative model for gifted education tailor makes the program to fit the assessed needs of the local district. It is a diagnostic and prescriptive approach to providing needed services. This chapter provides insight into how theories of intelligence and definitions of giftedness are incorporated into the local program. In effect, how to take the base components and align them with local needs. The theoretical base that is chosen will direct the focus of the entire program from philosophy through identification and services.

DEFINITIONS OF GIFTEDNESS

Purposes and Criteria for a Definition of Giftedness

1. It must be based on the best available research about the characteristics of gifted individuals rather than a romanticized notion or unsupported opinion.
2. It must provide guidance in the selection and/or development of instruments and procedures that can be used to design defensible identification systems.
3. It must give direction and be logically related to the programming practices such as the selection of materials and instructional methods, the selection and training of teachers, and the determination of procedures that can be used for evaluation.
4. It must be capable of generating research studies that will verify or fail to verify the validity of the definition.

Source: Unknown

A sucessful program works because it effectively addresses the needs of gifted students in a specific school or school district and these needs generally vary from school to school, district to district.
—Borland, pg. 46

THEORETICAL USE OF DEFINITIONS

This manual will focus on three definitions. Since your program is being developed to meet the unique needs of the students in your community, you may wish to explore other definitions. In development process, you will synthesize and adapt them as needed for your program.

USOE DEFINITION (1978)

This definition is an umbrella concept and is the broadest based conception. It defines the needs for talent development in the areas of *intellectual, creative, specific academic, leadership, performing and visual arts.* By adopting this definition the district may centralize all services for high-ability students under one program. Program options should address

all of these areas. Talent finding should address each of these areas and services should be structured to meet the needs of those determined to be the most talented or evidence the greatest potential talent in these areas. Typically, the talent finding process for this model is divided into a screening section using a high percentile ranking on a standardized achievement test, a standardized aptitude test and a teacher rating scale; a preassessment period where the student is more closely monitored for high potential; and a more formal evaluation period in which individualized testing may occur.

This definition is widely used by many states and districts. Montana State Law uses an adaptation of this one. A criticism of this definition is that the categories are "frequently ambiguous, indefinable, or overlapping, and are frequently adopted without regard for their actual implications for identification or programming" (Treffinger and Renzulli, 1986 in Davis and Rimm, 1989, p. 13). This definition was revised by the U.S. Department of Education in 1993. The revision is included in chapter four.

MULTIPLE INTELLIGENCES THEORY

If some degree of subjectivity cannot be tolerated, then our definition of giftedness and the resulting programs will logically be limited to abilities that can only be measured by objective tests. —Renzulli, J.S. "What makes giftedness: Reexamining a definition." Phi Delta Kappan, 60, p.181)

The use of Howard Gardner's (1983) theory of multiple intelligences is redefining our view of intelligence, or human intellectual competence, and of the ways we can identify extraordinary potential. Definitions grounded in this theory are directed toward the observation of an individual's ability to "resolve genuine problems or difficulties and, when appropriate, to create an effective product—and must also entail the potential for finding or creating problems—thereby laying the groundwork for the acquisition of new knowledge" (Gardner, l983,pp.60-61)

Models are being developed and tested that rely on the trained observation of traits which seem to be common in people with extraordinary problem-solving potential. These models attempt to identify this potential within the community's culture and to use these cultural traits to help define high potential. This assures that the assessment of extraordinary potential is that which is valued in its own culture.

Using Howard Gardner's Theory of Multiple Intelligences (1983), C. June Maker has developed the definition stating that the key element in giftedness or high competence is "The ability to solve the most complex problems in the most efficient, effective, or economical ways."According to this definition, a gifted individual possesses abilities traditionally associated with both high intelligence and high creativity. Such an individual is capable of:

a. understanding problems already defined clearly,

b. using the most efficient, effective, or economical methods that are known, and

c. reaching appropriate solutions based on current knowledge and thought.

The gifted individual also is capable of:

a. creating a new or clearer definition of an existing problem,

b. devising new and more efficient, effective, or economical methods, and

c. reaching solutions that may be different from the usual, but are recognized as being better than previous solutions.

(Maker, Educating Able Learners, Fall 1992, p.13)

This definition seems to have much merit. The essence of the definition is that the gifted or highly able individual has superior problem-solving ability.

Another view of giftedness, also based on Gardner's work, is being proposed by Mary Frasier. Her work indicates that we do not measure giftedness directly. Instead, we infer giftedness by observing certain characteristics or behaviors of individuals (Hagan, 1980, pg. 1). This model also includes the idea that "factors found in differing sociocultural contexts impact the manifestation of giftedness thereby influencing the way giftedness is identified" (Frasier, M.M., Martin, D.E., and Garcia, J. H., 1992). Based on this work, a culturally unbiased identification system is being developed to help guide the identification and programming for high-ability students. The system will be discussed in the next chapter on Identification.

No single (predeveloped or theoretical) model can hope to meet the needs of school districts that differ along so many lines. —Borland pg. 46 (parens added)

THREE-RING MODEL DEFINITION

Another frequently used definition is Renzulli's Three-Ring Model. Renzulli (1986) argues that "Gifted behavior...reflects an interaction among three basic clusters of human traits—these clusters being above average (but not necessarily high) general and/or specific abilities, high levels of task commitment (motivation), and high levels of creativity. Gifted and talented children are those possessing or capable of developing this composite set of traits and applying them to any potentially valuable area of human performance" (Davis and Rimm,1989).

This conception of giftedness suggests that gifted behaviors can be developed in a broader spectrum (up to 15 to 20 percent) of the school population than the small percentage of students who are usually identified by high scores on intelligence or achievement tests.

There is some concern in the field that this definition can lead to identifying only those students who are already succeeding in an educational program.

For further information on program theory and definitions:

Borland, James H.; Planning and Implementing Programs for the Gifted, Teachers College Press, New York, 1989

Davis, Gary A. and Sylvia B. Rimm; Education of the Gifted and Talented, Prentice Hall, New Jersey, 1989

Frasier, M.M., Martin, D.E., and Garcia, J.H., A paradigm to guide investigations into the identification of gifted in economically disadvantaged and limited English proficiency populations, Unpublished manuscript. University of Georgia, National Research Center on the Gifted and Talented, Athens, GA, 1992

Gardner, Howard; Frames of Mind, The Theory of Multiple Intelligences, Basic Books, New York, 1983

Maker, C. June; "Intelligence and Creativity in Multiple Intelligences: Identification and Development," Educating Able Learners, Fall 1992

Renzulli, Joseph S., Editor; Systems and Models for Development Programs for the Gifted and Talented; Creative Learning Press, Inc., 1986

A systems approach or administrative model for gifted education tailor makes the program to fit the assessed needs of the local district.

The committee's task is to review the various philosophies, theories and definitions and to develop a philosophy statement and definition of giftedness for the local program.

Chapter 4

Identification of Students

INTRODUCTION

This chapter will focus on how to identify the students that will be served in your district's program. Using the definition of high ability agreed upon by your community, it is now the task to create a means of identifying students which is consistent with the program philosophy and definition of high ability or giftedness.

There are certain "best practices" that must be observed no matter what program is developed. These can help ensure that all students with needs will be found.

1. Focus should be on diversity within gifted populations. The gifted are not a homogeneous group nor do they express their talents in the same way.
2. The goal should be inclusion rather then exclusion.
3. Data should be gathered from multiple sources; a single criterion of giftedness should be avoided.
4. Both objective and subjective data should be used.
5. Professionals and nonprofessionals who represent various areas of expertise and who are knowledgeable about behavioral indicators of giftedness should be involved.
6. Identification should occur as early as possible and should be continuous.
7. Special attention should be given to the different ways in which children from different cultures manifest behavioral indicators of giftedness.
8. Decision making should be delayed until all pertinent data on a student has been reviewed.
9. Data collected during the identification process should be used to help determine the individual child's curriculum.

—Dr. Mary Frasier

Intelligence is quickness in seeing things as they are.
—Geroge Santayana

SOURCES OF INFORMATION FOR MEASURING POTENTIAL TALENT

Three factors must be considered during the process of talent finding: test data, performance data, and developmental data. Each plays its own part in finding talent and identifying the needs to be served by the program.

TEST DATA

A variety of instruments are available. Considerations must be made to select instruments that will effectively screen the talent your program is being planned to serve.

PERFORMANCE DATA

This data is collected to demonstrate the student's accomplishments both in and out of school. It includes the student's school records and any skills or products the student has developed inside or outside of school.

Screening is the ongoing process used to find all high-ability students in need of services.

DEVELOPMENTAL DATA

This data comes from a variety of sources both inside the school (teachers, counselors, other staff) and from the community and family. It supports the test and performance data to suggest that this student is "ahead" of his/her age peers and helps define programming needs.

SCREENING AND PREASSESSMENT: FINDING POTENTIAL TALENT

Screening is the ongoing process used to find all high-ability students in need of services. It is important that we "cast the net" as widely as possible to assure that we "catch" all high-ability students; both those achieving at a high level and those who may not be at present. Materials commonly used in the screening process are:

test data—

group aptitude and achievement tests normally used by your district

- the recommendation is to include all students scoring one standard deviation above the mean

performance and developmental data—

- cumulative records, student portfolios, student products and performances, plus observations by teachers, other professionals, parents, the community, and peers

Preassessment in the screening process may also involve designing and implementing appropriate activities that highlight student's abilities in order to establish an educational need. These may include specialized lessons, projects or other activities establishing educational need or designed to indicate the potential for performing at high levels of accomplishment when compared with others of their age, experience, or environment.

FORMAL ASSESSMENT: MEASURING POTENTIAL TALENT

Formal assessment involves using measures to establish the educational potential and needs of the individual students which your program will serve. Instruments and other indicators should be chosen whose results reflect and support the program goals and philosophy for which your program is designed. Both objective and subjective measures should be used.

It is increasingly evident that subjective evaluation is vital if we are to achieve an equitable program free of bias. Subjective measures include both performance and developmental data. Well-designed and research-based subjective measures should be given equal consideration when compared with objective measures in the identification of high-ability students.

If some degree of subjectivity cannot be tolerated, then our definition of giftedness and the resulting programs will logically be limited to abilities that can only be measured by objective tests —Renzulli, J.S. What makes giftedness: Reexamining a definition. Phi Delta Kappan, 60, p.181)

Several observation instruments have been developed and researched. They are providing reliable results that tend to be bias free plus help to educate the observer as to the traits of the high-ability students.

Dr. Mary Fraxier, director of the University of Georgia National Research Center on the Gifted and Talented, has formulated a method for identifying gifted children from varying cultural and economic groups. Integrated throughout this systematic apprach are ten Traits, Aptitudes, and Behaviors (TABs) which have been found through research to be consistently associated with the psychological construct of giftedness.

The ten TABs are Motivation, Interests, Communication Skills, Problem-Solving Ability, Memory, Inquiry, Insight, Reasoning, Imagination/Creativity, and Humor. These TABs serve as the basis for referral, assessment, creation of the individual student profile, and recommendations for meeting the student's needs. An important component of this approach is the consideration that the TABs may be manifested differently among differing cultural or economic groups.

The Research-Based Assessment plan was developed primarily as a means of finding and identifying a greater number of gifted students among traditionally underserved groups; however, its application as a means of equitably identifying gifted children from all groups of the general population merits serious consideration and thorough investigation.

A problem-solving based model was developed and is being tested by Dr. C. June Maker in the Southwest. It relies on the observation of problem-solving abilities in d

problem situations. This method is also culturally non-biased (Maker, 1992).

In the past, students were not identified until they were about eight years old. This practice may cause problems for high-ability students whose needs are not being met in the early years of school.

The Kingore Observation Inventory (KOI) is an observation instrument which is used by classroom teachers to note the behaviors of K-3 high-ability students over a sixweek period of time. It also serves as a curriculum-wide instructional focus in providing programs which accent the behaviors characteristic of gifted youth (Kingore, 1992).

The Early Assessment for Exceptional Potential Portfolio Process (Shaklee, 1989) for grades K-3 relies on multiple sources of data (six types of verbal and non-verbal) from a minimum of four persons who know the child well. The data is collected over a 12-week time frame. Shaklee's research indicated that teachers believe that the portfolios have a lot more weight than tests. Her research also indicated that the teachers have made a major shift in blending instruction and management. The teachers perceive themselves as having developed more child-centered classrooms which relieves them of a dictatorial role (Shaklee, 1992).

Using the collected data the instructional team determines the student's needs for additional programming. This team, which includes involved staff, parents, and the student (if mature enough to participate), will develop the student's Individual Learning Plan.

FINAL PLACEMENT OF THE STUDENT

Using the collected data the instructional team determines the student's needs for additional programming. This team, which includes involved staff, parents, and the student (if mature enough to participate), will develop the student's Individual Learning Plan. All of the data collected for evaluation should be used to design a plan to meet the student's educational needs.

Students included in the screening, but not formally placed, obviously have educational needs which are not being met. A plan should be devised to meet these needs.

ACTION STEPS

In summary, the components of a quality identification document are:

I. Philosophy Statement

   A. Agree on a definition of high-ability students to be served by the program

   B. Define your program based on the theoretical model your community chooses and meets the needs of the students your community has committed to serve

II. The Identification Process

A. Decide on ages and areas of ability to be identified

B. Define procedure to be used and the rationale for use

C. Select instruments to be used and the rationale for use

D. Understand the limitations of the instruments and the procedure

E. Prescribe the steps of the identification process

1. Preassessment /Screening

a. Existing Records (cumulative file, portfolio, student products)

b. Group Tests (recommendation of one standard deviation above the mean, Borland, p.101)

c. Referrals from teachers, parents, and the student using an instrument that finds the behaviors your program is designed to support

2. Form a Candidate Pool

a. Additional testing of the aptitudes the program is designed to support (e.g., individual intelligence testing)

b. Exposure to enrichment activities

3. Final Placement of the Student

a. Selection Formula (<u>weighted matrices are NOT recommended</u>)

b. Selection committee composed of classroom teachers, teachers for the program for high-ability students, administrators, psychologists, program coordinators and possibly school board members, parents, and students using a case study approach recommends a plan to meet the student's needs

4. Procedure for meeting needs of students not formally identified.

5. Procedure for Evaluation of Identification Process

For information, analysis and evaluation of instruments used in the identification of gifted students or in the evaluation of gifted programs, contact:

The National Research Center on the Gifted and Talented
Data Base Requests
Curry School of Education
405 Emmet Street
University of Virginia
Charlottesville, VA 22903

The correlation between IQ and achievement is about 0.60. While this is a high correlation, it is not absolute. This correlation means that about one-third of what is measured by achievement tests can be attributed to intelligence. The other two-thirds can be attributed to motivation, interest, background, and other factors.
—Clasen, Robert E. and Donna R. Clasen, <u>Gifted and Talented Students: a Step by Step Approach to Programming</u>, Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction, 1987, p.5).

TEL (804)982-2849

For more information on identification of students:

Kingore, Bertie W., The Kingore Observation Inventory, Leadership Publishers, Inc. , P.O. Box 8358, Des Moines, Iowa 50301, 1990

Maker, C. June, "Intelligence and Creativity in Multiple Intelligences: Identification and Development," Educating Able Learners, Fall 1992, pp.12-19

Shaklee, Beverly D., "Early Assessment for Exceptional Potential in Young Minority and/or Economically Disadvantaged Students," Kent State University, Kent, Ohio, 1992 Preliminary Findings reported at Javits Conference, December 1992, Washington, D.C.

Chapter 5

Programming

INTRODUCTION

This chapter examines ways to utilize the opportunities currently available in your present curriculum, expand to new areas, and develop a comprehensive program.

COMPREHENSIVE PROGRAMMING FRAMEWORK

This term is used to suggest a collection of programming options designed to match services to the needs of high-ability students. This framework is comprehensive in that it includes the programming options already in place, validates them, and expands to include other options to meet the local needs. It recognizes the strength of the regular classroom as the base of services and the opportunities and enrichment that the "essential" classroom teacher brings to that base. It builds on the base to include options outside of the regular classroom to serve the special needs of some students, yet recognizes the needs of those few students who require even more individualized programming. It emphasizes the importance of support services throughout a well-designed program.

Although this framework allows flexibility and provides a perspective of the "whole program," it is essential that each piece be a part of the integrated whole. The support functions should be integrated throughout the program and are essential pieces to program development and implementation. This framework is not tied to a particular philosophical or theoretical base and may be used with all identification processes.

The key concept in providing appropriate services to high-ability students is to offer options that place... "students at an appropriate instructional level, creating the best possible match between students' achievement and instruction, and allows them to move forward in the curriculum as they achieve mastery of content and skills" (Daniel, R. and Cox, J., Flexible Pacing for Able Learners, 1988).

This concept may be the ***single most important concept*** for designing programs for high-ability students. Students ***must*** be able to move ahead on the basis of mastery.

Comprehensive Integrated Gifted Education Programming Framework for Identified Gifted and Talented Students

As a mosaic is built piece by piece, the project (designing a program) builds upon current exemplary elements and adds new programs and new ideas.
—Gifted Students Institute

OPTIONS WITHIN THE REGULAR CLASSROOM

CURRICULUM MODIFICATION

By using the curriculum "compacting" modification, the instructor can match the curriculum to the learner needs. This approach is particularly successful in skill-based

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instructional areas, such as math, reading skills, spelling and language arts. Three steps are integral to this process.

1. Preassessment. Before teaching a content/skill area, the instructor determines what parts of it the students already know. Chapter tests, mastery tests and skills "spot" tests administered at the start of a new unit or chapter have all proved to be practical ways to preassess.

2. Modification. Once the teacher knows the match between what students know and what they need to know in the curriculum, the teacher can modify for instruction. Flexible grouping based on skills mastery is one effective, teacher-friendly way to accomplish this. Students flow in and out of the instructional group based on the gaps in their skills knowledge.

3. Learning activities. Students who have proven mastery of a particular set of skills or an entire chapter "buy" that instructional time to work on more appropriate curriculum. To be successful for both students and teachers, learning opportunities need to be based on the student's individual interests, to focus on a student's strengths—not to shore up areas of weakness; to incorporate some degree of student choice, and to include a plan for structuring the student's use of time, as well as a standard of measurement for completed work. These learning opportunities should provide an intellectual challenge for the student, not be "more of the same" activities.

Although enrichment and acceleration may be a part of the process, compacting encompasses much more. It is, in fact, more closely associated with diagnosis and prescription, methods used in remedial education.

In remedial education, diagnosis and prescription point out learning objectives students have not yet mastered, and instruction is intended to help students "catch up" with the rest of the class. With compacting, pretesting identifies learning objectives already mastered. Students are allowed to "test out" of certain academic exercises and move on to new material.

Reis, Sally M., Deborah E. Burns, Joseph S. Renzulli, Curriculum Compacting: A Guide for Teachers, The National Research Center on the Gifted and Talented, 1992.

ENRICHMENT vs ACCELERATION

All students should have enriching experiences as a regular part of their academic life. Enrichment and acceleration are complimentary parts of a curriculum for highability students. The critical point is that all three factors—content, process, and product—must be both enriched and accelerated. Without both acceleration and enrichment, more is simply more; the qualitative difference is not reached.

Other appropriate options for flexible pacing based on the students needs might be:

√ early entrance into school or grade skipping
√ cluster or ability grouping may be used particularly for skill work

√ interest groups
√ within and cross-grade level grouping
√ compacted course work
√ testing out of course work
√ learning centers
√ concurrent enrollment (dual enrollment in college and high school)
√ early graduation

DIFFERENTIATED CURRICULUM with flexible pacing...

In a comprehensive program for high-ability learners the core curriculum in the fundamental learning areas must be differentiated or modified. These modifications may occur in the *content, process, product and/or learning environment.* Since this learning usually takes place in the regular classroom, the classroom teacher is the "essential" teacher in the delivery of the curriculum based on the needs of the student.

In a comprehensive program for high-ability learners the core curriculum in the fundamental learning areas must be differentiated or modified. These modifications may occur in the content, process, product and/or learning environment.

Principles of a Differentiated Curriculum for the Gifted/Talented

- Present content that is related to broad-based issues, themes, or problems.
- Integrate multiple disciplines into the area of study.
- Present comprehensive, related, and mutually reinforcing experiences within an area of study.
- Allow for the in-depth learning of a self-selected topic within the area of study.
- Develop independent or self-directed study skills.
- Develop productive, complex, abstract, and/or higher-level thinking skills.
- Focus on open-ended tasks.
- Develop research skills and methods.
- Integrate basic skills and higher-level thinking skills into the curriculum.
- Encourage the development of products that challenge existing ideas and produce "new" ideas.
- Encourage the development of products that use new techniques, materials and forms.
- Encourage the development of self-understanding, i.e., recognizing and using one's abilities, becoming self-directed, appreciating likenesses and differences

between oneself and others.

- Evaluate student outcomes by using appropriate and specific criteria through self-appraisal, criterion-referenced and/or standardized instruments.

National/State Leadership Training Institute on the Gifted and Talented, Developed by the Curriculum Council (James J. Gallagher, Sandra N. Kaplan, A. Harry Passow, Joseph S. Renzulli, Irving S. Sato, Dorothy Sisk, Janice Wickless).

Curriculum Modification

Content	Process	Products	Learning Environment
•Abstraction	•Higher Levels	•Real Problems of Thinking	•Open, Accepting, and Non-threatening
•Complexity	•Open-Endedness	•Real Audiences	
•Organization	•Inquiry/Discovery •Inductive/Deductive Reasoning	•Product Evaluations •Transformation	
	•Freedom of Choice •Group Interactions/ Simulations •Variety •Pacing		

Content Modification

CONTENT consists of facts, descriptive information, concepts, ideas, generalizations, principles, and rules that are presented to learners. Content modifications include the use of:

- ABSTRACTION—going beyond the facts and the obvious to the conceptual framework, underlying ideas, symbolism, and hidden meanings of the content.
- COMPLEXITY—posing more challenging questions or situations that force the learner to deal with the intricacies of the content.
- ORGANIZATION—selecting new arrangements of content, e.g., functional similarities, categorical groups, descriptive similarities, in place of the typical chronological organization.

Process Modification

PROCESS is the presentation of content, including the learning activities for students, the questions which are asked, as well as the teaching methods and thinking skills used. Process modifications include the use of:

- HIGHER LEVELS OF THINKING—emphasizing questions that enable the learner to analyze, synthesize or evaluate.
- OPEN ENDEDNESS—asking questions that promote critical and creative thinking.
- INQUIRY—providing opportunities for the learner to arrive at self-drawn conclusions or generalizations.
- INDUCTIVE AND DEDUCTIVE REASONING—asking the learner to cite the sources, clues given, and logic used in drawing conclusions.
- FREEDOM OF CHOICE—providing opportunities for self-directed activities such as independent study.
- GROUP INTERACTIONS/SIMULATIONS—using structured simulations for group problem-solving.
- VARIETY—encouraging a variety of teaching strategies.
- PACING
    - the *rapidity* with which content is presented.
    - the *extension* of time and deadlines so that further integration of ideas may take place.
    - *flexibility* in time allowance.

PROCESS is the presentation of content, including the learning activities for students, the questions which are asked, as well as the teaching methods and thinking skills used.

Product Modifications

PRODUCTS are the outcomes of instruction, whether tangible or intangible, complex or unsophisticated. Products will have characteristics that are professional in nature. Appropriate modifications include:

- REAL PROBLEMS—exposure to questions or problems investigated by professionals appropriate to the discipline.
- REAL AUDIENCES—encouragement to develop products directed toward an audience of "professionals" or "experts" in that discipline.
- PRODUCT EVALUATION—combination of teacher assessment using preestablished criteria with pupil self-evaluation and evaluation by a "real

audience."

- TRANSFORMATIONS—development of student products which are beyond more summarization of the concepts presented, i.e., reinterpretation, elaboration, extension, and synthesis.

Learning Environment Modification

LEARNING ENVIRONMENT is the setting in which learning occurs, and it may be both physical and psychological. In modifying the setting, the characteristics, strengths and preferences of the learner must be considered.

PRODUCTS are the outcomes of instruction, whether tangible or intangible, complex or unsophisticated.

The teacher must develop an atmosphere which will allow for OPENNESS AND ACCEPTANCE to encourage the student behaviors of:

- FLEXIBILITY—ability to shift perspectives or directions of thought and ideas easily.
- FLUENCY—ability to rapidly generate a large number of answers to an openended question.
- ELABORATION—ability to "improve" upon a simple idea through embellishment or detail.
- ORIGINALITY—ability to generate a unique thought or product.
- RISK-TAKING—courage to take a guess in a safe environment to develop tolerance for risking failure in an ambiguous setting.
- COMPLEXITY—presenting progressively more difficult challenges through ideas, problems, and solutions.
- CURIOSITY—willingness to pursue an idea beyond an introductory stage.

LEARNING ENVIRONMENT is the setting in which learning occurs, and it may be both physical and psychological.

Source: Gifted Education Resource Guide, Illinois State Board of Education

OPTIONS BEYOND THE REGULAR CLASSROOM

√ pull-out options which
  - relate to talents and abilities
  - relate to curriculum
  - use compacting and contracting
  - use flexible grouping
  - use resource teachers and materials

√ mini courses
√ honors classes
√ cluster or interest area groups
√ seminars
√ co-curricular/extracurricular activities

- √ Talent Pool activities
- √ Odyssey of the Mind, Future Problem Solving, Scholar's Bowl, Academic Decathlon and other academic competitions

INDIVIDUALIZED PROGRAMMING

- √ Individualized Learning Plans
- √ Independent Research
- √ Internships
- √ Mentorships
- √ Radical Acceleration
- √ Early entrance at any level

IN SUMMARY, QUALITY PROGRAMS MUST MEET STUDENT NEEDS IN THE FOLLOWING AREAS:

- √ facilitate a high level of mastery of the content and skills of the core curriculum
- √ facilitate a mastery of content skills tailored to the learner's needs
- √ develop and challenge abilities to utilize higher levels of thinking
- √ cultivate self-directed learning and self-evaluation skills
- √ facilitate production of original knowledge and products
- √ nurture personal growth toward self-understanding and self-expression
- √ promote a highly developed love of learning and doing

PROGRAM IMPLEMENTATION

After the planning committee develops the proposal for the 3-5 year plan for implementation of the program, it is presented to the steering committee along with the proposal for student identification. These proposals must then be revised, if necessary, and adopted by the steering committee. At this time it is important that the local school board accept the proposals and adopt the necessary policy statements so that options such as early entrance, grade skipping, acceleration and test out, concurrent enrollment, and early graduation are supported by board policy.

Program Design Standards of the Council for Exceptional Children

Program design is the plan for the administrative configuration through which instruction is delivered to gifted and talented students. Since these students are receiving service throughout the educational system, programs that fall into this category go beyond those designated as "G/T" and include *all* programs in which gifted and talented students are involved. The intent is to build a flexible system of viable program options throughout the general and special education structures that are compatible with and can be matched to the strengths, needs, and interests of gifted and talented students.

You have to make friends long before you need them.
—Lyndon B. Johnson

1. **Programs for the Gifted and Talented Are Articulated With General Education Programs**

   Programs for the gifted and talented are part of the general program offerings of the school district, as these students are typically involved in programs that are considered general education.

   Articulation involves planning the extension of general education programs in order to address the needs of these students; policy review to assure that policies encourage involvement in rigorous programs; and communication between parties to keep all participants informed and the program developing.

2. **Programs Are Comprehensive, Structured, and Sequenced Across Grade Levels**

   Comprehensive programs for the gifted and talented go beyond academics and include options in areas such as the arts, leadership, and creativity. These programs are planned and ordered so that students can continue to develop their skills.

3. **Programs Are an Integral Part of the School Day and May be Extended to Other School and Community-Related Settings**

   Programs for the gifted and talented are central to the students' educational program and meet during the school day. In some instances, programs may be held before or after school or in settings other than school when the nature of the experience (not the convenience of the schedule) requires this timing.

4. **Administrative Structures and Program Options Are Based on Student Needs**

   The program options offered are determined by the needs of the students being served. These options may vary based on the needs and resources of the community. Ongoing needs assessments are necessary in order to assure that current needs and options are compatible.

5. **All Gifted and Talented Students Are Assured Programs Commensurate**

The intent is to build a flexible system of viable program options throughout the general and special education structures that are compatible with and can be matched to the strengths, needs, and interests of gifted and talented students.

With Their Abilities

Programs are available that represent the varying ranges of ability and needs displayed by gifted and talented students. Access to the programs is guaranteed to these students.

6. **Resources for Program Development and Implementation Are Distributed Equitably Throughout the School District**

   Gifted and talented students throughout a school district are given appropriate educational programs regardless of the school they attend. Resources are distributed based on student needs.

7. **Programs Incorporate a Blend of Community Resources and School-Based Support Services in Program Development and Delivery**

   School psychologists, social workers, content area specialists, counselors, and community members add expertise to the planning and implementation of program options. They expand the range of support for the programs and open doors to opportunities for students beyond those available through the district or individual program personnel.

The program options offered are determined by the needs of the students being served.

8. **Specialists in Gifted Child Education Are Consulted in Program Policy Development**

   Informed advocates for these students give district personnel guidance in program planning so that the procedures and policies are consistent with the needs of gifted and talented students.

9. Ongoing Program Evaluation Activities Are Conducted for the Purpose of Continued Program Development

   A plan for evaluation is in place and implemented so that program decisions are based on data generated from program students and personnel.

Reprinted from Council for Exceptional Children, The Association for the Gifted (1990), *Standards for Program Involving the Gifted and Talented.* Reston, VA: ERIC Clearinghouse on Handicapped and Gifted Children.

STAFF DEVELOPMENT

Without the understanding of the staff and the administration, even the best program will be short lived. It is, therefore, essential that these people be aware of the needs of high-ability students and be a part of the development of the plan to serve these needs.

For more information on program development:

Clasen, Robert E., Educating Able Learners, Agency for Instructional Technology, 1991 (12-part video series)

Colangelo, Nicholas and Gary Davis, Handbook of Gifted Education; Allyn and Bacon, 1991

Cox, June, Neil Daniel, and Bruce O. Boston; Educating Able Learners; University of Texas Press, Austin, Texas, 1985

Dettmer, Peggy, Linda P. Thurston, and Norma Dyck; Consultation, Collaboration, and Teamwork for Students with Special Needs, Allyn and Bacon, 1993

Davis, Gary A. and Sylvia B. Rimm; Education of the Gifted and Talented. Second Edition; Prentice Hall, New Jersey, 1989

Parke, Beverly N.; Gifted Students in Regular Classrooms; Allyn and Bacon, 1989

Renzulli, Joseph S., Editor; Systems and Models for Developing Programs for The Gifted and Talented; Creative Learning Press, Inc., 1986

VanTassel-Baska, Joyce, John Feldhusen, Ken Seeley, Grayson Wheatley, Linda Silverman, William Foster; Comprehensive Curriculum for Gifted Learners, Allyn and Bacon, 1988

Without the understanding of the staff and the administration, even the best program will be short lived. It is therefore essential that these people be aware of the needs of high-ability student and be a part of the development of the plan to serve these needs.

Quality programs must meet individual student needs. In general, the learner goals we desire for high-ability students are to have the student:

- √ demonstrate a high level of mastery of the content and skills of the core curriculum
- √ master content and skills as appropriate
- √ develop and challenge abilities in using higher levels of thinking
- √ cultivate self-directed learning and self-evaluation skills
- √ produce original knowledge and products
- √ exhibit personal growth toward self-understanding and self-expression
- √ share a highly developed love of learning and doing
- √ demonstrate interpersonal growth and understanding

In the design of a plan for the individual student, each of the above factors, plus the *student's interests* and *style of learning* must be considered, as well as the curriculum and method of delivery so that the student has the opportunity to achieve the desired goals. As evidenced in the learner goals for high-ability students, not only *academic* areas but also *social and emotional* goals are addressed. It is vitally important that an individual learning plan address both of these areas.

The individual learning plan for a student should be developed with input from the classroom teacher or teachers, the enrichment specialist, the parents, the counselor, and the student, and any others involved in the implementation of the plan (e.g., mentors or administrators).

The plan should indicate who is accountable for the implementation of the plan and who is responsible for the fulfillment of each goal or objective. Generally, the program coordinator is responsible for the overall plan, but classroom teachers or mentors may be co-facilitators of the academic curriculum. The counselor is often involved in the social/emotional areas of the plan. Each participant (particularly parents and older students), plus the building administrator, should have a copy of the plan.

The plan should also indicate the date that the goals and objectives are to be implemented and when they are to be completed.

The individual learning plan for a student should be developed with input from the classroom teacher or teachers, the enrichment specialist, the parents, the counselor, and the student, and any others involved in the implementation of the plan (e.g., mentors or administrators).

This plan should stress *acceleration* of the curriculum where appropriate, *plus enrichment* in the areas of interest. Modifications to the curriculum for high-ability students involves a three-step process:

1. Credit is given for prior learning.
2. There is a reduction (compacting) of tasks and/or replacement of "regular" tasks with a more challenging study.
3. New experiences or activities are constructed and these activities capitalize on the students' strengths.

With a differentiated curriculum-based program, mastery of the learner goals in each content area is considered a basic educational requirement. The natural extension or enrichment of these outcomes is necessary because of the early mastery of these outcomes by the student as compared to their age/grade peers.

The plan should indicate who is accountable for the implementation of the plan and who is responsible for the fulfillment of each goal or objective.

- √ assess prior learning using formalized tests, observations, or evaluation of student products
- √ depend on the established curriculum with defined objectives and assessment
- √ give students an opportunity to review the objectives and practice the skills to be tested
- √ set competency expectations at an agreed upon level (often 80%)
- √ manage more easily by units or small sections during the early years of schooling and by courses or semesters during high school
- √ ensure the practice with board policy
- √ provide instructional options using advanced level thinking skills to extend regular curriculum
- √ provide a variety of activities in various learning styles relating to the objectives
- √ encourage student production of ideas or products to meet extended objectives
- √ keep records of process and the products of the student's extended study (a process-folio with input and evaluation from the student showing the work in progress, as well as the final product may be appropriate)
- √ grading should be based on a combination of planning, including time management, and the quality of the product.

A well-developed individual learning plan for a high-ability learner should be integrated into the regular curriculum and should extend it. The learnings should be as

a replacement and extension of the general curriculum, not in addition to it. This plan should be based on the student's prior work (thus utilizing the process-folio) and addressing both strengths and needs. The student should play an integral part in developing the plan, refining it during the process, assessing the learnings and the use of time and resources, and finally in developing the next plan. The student should be given responsibilities for his/her own learning.

Curriculum design is the plan for the instructional component of the gifted and talented student's program. It includes the content, methodology, resources, and products of instruction. Without sound curricular practices, program configurations are meaningless. Curriculum involving gifted and talented students is the focus of these standards. They should be applied to any class in which gifted and talented students are enrolled.

1. **Curriculum (Preschool-12) Is Articulated, Comprehensive, and Includes Substantive Scope and Sequence**

   Curriculum that responds to the needs of gifted and talented students appears in all grades and all subject areas. A scope and sequence plan outlining the types and progression of skills to be learned is available and consulted when making curricular decisions about individual students.

2. **Curriculum Is Based on the Assessed Needs of Students Including the Areas of Intellectual, Emotional, Physical, Ethical, and Social Development**

   The needs of gifted and talented students extend beyond academics. Fullscale assessment conducted during or after identification can give instructors valuable information for curricular planning. A student's instructional plan reflects the unique needs of the individual student.

3. **Curriculum Matches Substantive Content With the Developmental Levels of the Gifted and Talented Student**

   Most gifted students have developmental patterns that must be taken into account when planning curriculum. Physical, cognitive, and emotional growth are among the developmental factors that can affect how students learn and how they express what they have learned.

4. **Curriculum Incorporates Content and Experiences That Employ and Facilitate Understanding of the Latest Ideas, Principles, and Technology in a Given Content Area**

   With rapidly changing academic fields of study, it is important that curriculum, including gifted and talented students, recognizes new ideas and is modified to reflect the changes in the form of the disciplines, how the fields are th about and conveyed, what is important to know, and the technology used.

A well-developed individual learning plan for a high-ability learner should be integrated into the regular curriculum and should extend it.

5. **Curriculum Provides Differentiation and Challenge for Students Through Involvement with Advanced and Rigorous Content and Procedures**

   The content and procedures used in curriculum are compatible with the abilities of the students involved in it. The opportunity to study content at a level commensurate with ability and achievement levels is offered to all gifted and talented students.

6. **Students Develop Critical and Creative Thinking Skills Through Instruction and Experiences Rooted in the Content Areas**

   Skills for processing and evaluating information are part of the curriculum design. Students employ such techniques as original research, independent study, problem solving, and invention as part of their study of content areas in order to develop these skills.

7. **Students Have Opportunities to Engage in Experiential and Interactive Learning Involving Real-Life Experiences That May Result in the Development of Sophisticated Products**

   Gifted and talented students are given the chance to become actively involved with the field they are studying. This may include activities such as working with a professional in the field through a mentorship or internship, studying a topic in depth in the library or laboratory, or developing an original product (i.e., book, idea, plan, portfolio, etc.) and presenting it publicly.

Curriculum design is the plan for the instructional component of the gifted and talented student's program. It includes the content, methodology, resources, and products of instruction.

8. **Flexible Pacing Is Employed, Allowing Students to Learn at the Pace and Level Appropriate to Their Abilities and Skills**

   Students are given the opportunity to work at their own level and pace. Assessment of skill levels, acceleration, skill groups, curriculum compacting, and individualization are among the methods that may be a part of the flexible pacing process.

9. **Curriculum Addresses the Attitudes and Skills Needed for Lifelong Independent Learning**

   Gifted and talented students learn a great deal on their own. It is vital that they be given the opportunity to develop the skills needed to become lifelong, independent learners.

10. **Specialists in Content Areas, Instructional Techniques, and Gifted Child Education Work With Curriculum Planners When Curriculum Is Being Planned and Evaluated**

    A team approach to curriculum planning is in place to ensure that the curriculum responds to the needs of gifted students, reflects current content of

practices in the academic fields, and is consistent with the goals and policies of the school district.

Reprinted from Council for Exceptional Children, The Association for the Gifted (1990), *Standards for Program Involving the Gifted and Talented.* Reston, VA: ERIC Clearinghouse on Handicapped and Gifted Children.

The assessment of the learner outcomes for high-ability students are no different than the best assessments for all students.

Assessment data should address:

√ Evidence of the extent to which students use *critical thinking* developed within the program to modify behaviors

√ Evidence of students' ability to display key *skills* addressed by the education program

√ Evidence of students' *attitudes* toward program goals

√ Evidence of students' knowledge regarding the *content* and data included in the education program

The assessment of the learner outcomes for highability students are no different than the best assessments for all students.

Program Assessment : a six-step process to curriculum improvement, Montana Office of Public Instruction, 1991.

Authentic assessment should integrate with the learning and instruction process and be a key part of that process. Rieneke Zessoules and Howard Gardner (developer of the ~~Theory of Multiple Intelligences) have studied~~ assessments as a support to more effective learning and have listed six important experiences.

"Students are challenged to do the following:

1. Tackle project work regularly and frequently. These students don't create one dance phrase, write one dramatic scene, or paint one family portrait and then move on to the next unit. They produce many works, exploring many aspects of the given discipline.
2. Judge their own work—not once or twice, but again and again, as it is in progress, finally completed, or in relation to earlier and later works.
3. Collaborate and converse with others, not as simply an interesting switch of pace, but as a critical element of working and thinking as active learners discussing, sharing, and learning from others' perceptions.

4. Distinguish a real audience for their work beyond the classroom teacher—challenging them to reflect on the intent and purpose of their work.

5. Picture their learning and development over time again, not only at the end of the year, but also across the weeks, months, and even years of their academic careers.

6. Understand what it means to get better—helping them to develop and strive for standards of excellence and performance."

Zessoules, Rieneke; and Howard Gardner, "Authentic Assessment: Beyond the Buzzword and Into the Classroom," Expanding Student Assessment, Edited by Vito Perrone, ASCD, 1991.

The development, implementation, and assessment of an Individual Learning Plan will customize the learning, build on the strengths, and support the needs of the student.

The Individual Learning Plan addresses the "how" you provide the needed services that your district defined in the philosophy statement. The student assessment is based on meeting the standards outlined in the Individual Learning Plan. The program is assessed on how well the various options available through the ILPs meet student needs.

Authentic assessment should integrate with the learning and instruction process and be a key part of that process.

Borland, James H.; Planning and Implementing Programs for the Gifted, Teachers College Press, New York, 1989

Colorado State Advisory Committee for Gifted and Talented Student Education, "Toward Principles Governing Outcomes, Learning Tasks, and Performance Standards for Gifted and Talented Learners," Colorado State Board of Education, June 1992

Davis, Gary A. and Sylvia B. Rimm; Education of the Gifted and Talented, Prentice Hall, New Jersey, 1989

Dettmer, Peggy; "Purposes and Programs for the Gifted," Kansas State University, 1983

Perrone, Vito, Editor; Expanding Student Assessment, Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development; Alexandria, Virginia; 1991

The Individual Learning Plan addresses the "how" you provide the needed services that your district defined in the philosophy statement.

Chapter 7

Meeting Students' Social/Emotional Needs Through Program Options

While academic programming is extremely important for high-ability students, support for the social and emotional aspects of maturing may be even more critical. Research shows that bright children need help understanding their feelings and developing their self-concept. They need to:

- Know how they are similar to and different from other people,
- Feel pride in their abilities, rather than guilt or anxiety,
- Learn how to value and accept people less able than themselves,
- Own their own talents and determine how they best fit into the world, and
- Belong to a group, and to the school community.

—Schmitz, Connie C. and Judy Galbraith, Managing the Social and Emotional Needs of the Gifted, Free Spirit Press, 1985.

We should take care not to make the intellect our god; it has, of course, powerful muscles, but no personality.
—Albert Einstein

Discussion of these topics may be in a small group of high-ability students or with an adult. Both should be led by someone trained in the interpersonal and intrapersonal aspects of giftedness.

Discussions and experiences should evolve around the following topics:

√ Extra Perception

The ability to have a deeper understanding and more acute awareness of physical, social and intrapersonal aspects of life.

√ High Involvement

Because of increased sensitivity to thoughts, actions, interests and materials, there is often a frustration with those who do not exhibit the same characteristics.

√ Emotional Sensitivity

Super-sensitivity caused by the high degree of perception may lead to problems.

James Alvino comments that they display "high standards of truth and morality . . . and are quick to judge those who don't measure up. They're affronted by hypocrisy, double standards, and other forms of logical and ethical contradiction."

√ **Perfectionism**

While concerned with accomplishment and the pursuit of excellence, oftentimes high-ability students are unable to accept a product of "high quality" because it is not perfect. Students need to develop criteria for their work and use that criteria for judging their accomplishments.

√ **Uneven Integration**

Students may excel in mental math or story writing but do not have the ability to "get it down on paper." This may be a real learning disability but probably can be attributed to the unevenness in the development of students' abilities. Very few students are high in everything, and we must help them learn to cope with these differences.

For further exploration of cognitive and affective characteristics, see Growing Up Gifted, by A. Barbara Clark (second edition, pages 37-40; third edition, pages 126-132).

While academic programming is extremely important for high-ability students, support for the social and emotional aspects of maturing may be even more critical.

Additional Concerns

√ The Quality and Quantity of Giftedness

As we learn more about intelligence, we are able to define it in more appropriate ways. Howard Gardner has explored the "seven intelligences," and we must understand and address the strengths in all of these intelligences.

We must also note the differences caused by the degree of the intelligence. A student with a very high IQ (above 150) is likely to feel more different than one with an IQ above 130.

√ **Gifted Girls, Ethnic Minorities, Learners with Disabilities and Rural Isolation**

Each of these groups present particular problems which must be dealt with in order for the student to develop fully. These are societal problems and students need both to be aware of the problems and given alternatives in order to deal with them. We, as professionals in the field, must also make others aware and help to alleviate the conditions.

Resources are becoming available to help develop programs to meet the social and emotional needs of high-ability students. This is a critical part of any well-developed program.

For more information on students' social/emotional needs:

Delisle, James R., Gifted Kids Speak Out, Free Spirit Press, 1987

Galbraith, Judy, The Gifted Kids Survival Guide, Free Spirit Press, 1984

Kerr, Barbara, A Handbook for Counseling the Gifted and Talented, American Association for Counseling and Development, 1991

Schmitz, Connie C. and Judy Galbraith, Managing the Social and Emotional Needs of the Gifted, Free Spirit Press, 1985

Webb, James T., Elizabeth a Meckstroth, and Stephanie S. Tolan, Guiding the Gifted Child, Ohio Psychology Publishing Company, 1982

As we learn more about intelligence, we are able to define it in more appropriate ways. Howard Gardner has explored the "seven intelligences," and we must understand and address the strengths in all of these intelligences.

Evaluation is a form of disciplined inquiry, the purpose of which is to produce information to assist in making informed value judgments about a program (Carolyn Callahan, 1992) for the purpose of improving the program under evaluation (James Borland, 1989).

This definition of evaluation contains several key elements which we will examine to gain an understanding of the process.

Disciplined inquiry—an exemplary evaluation shall involve a high degree of academic rigor (i.e., how you know what you know) and shall be characterized by its publicness.

Produce information to assist in making informed value judgments—the information collected shall be used to evaluate the effectiveness of the program (i.e., its goodness, badness, does it work, does it not work, why, and how).

Purpose of improving the program under evaluation—the information collected shall be used for program renewal/improvement.

We must not cease from exploration and the end of all our exploring will be to arrive where we began and to know the place for the first time.
—T.S. Eliot

√ **to document the need for the program**

Why implement this program in the first place?

√ **to document the case for the particular program approach**

What makes you believe the approach you have advocated (e.g., comprehensive programming model vs. pull-out model) will work?

√ **to document the feasibility of implementing the program**

What makes you believe that given available resources, the program can be implemented as intended?

√ **to document the fact the program is being implemented**

Does the program exist in fact as well as on paper?

√ **to assist in the identification of program strengths/weaknesses**

What parts of the program appear to be working and what parts appear not to be working?

√ **to generate information to assist in making in progress revisions of the program**

What needs to be changed and what are some alternative ways of changing it?

√ **to document the results/impacts of the program in terms of:**

(A) students
(B) program staff
(C) regular school personnel
(D) parents
(E) community
(F) the institution or school system

√ **to document the results/impacts for**

(A) funding agents, and

(B) potential adopters

—Carolyn Callahan, 1992

Evaluation is a form of disciplined inquiry, the purpose of which is to produce information to assist in making informed value judgments about a program (Carolyn Callahan, 1992) for the purpose of improving the program under evaluation. (James Borland, 1989)

This is the key piece on which the program will be evaluated. It will provide the standard against which comparisons can be made and will provide the operational plan of the program.

1. Determine the "boundary " of the program. Give it a name, describe its general process, list its major resource conditions and major goals.
2. Analyze the program into 3-7 major functional components—examples include: Identification of students, program development and management, staff development, curriculum development, instruction, evaluation, etc. Describe the major function of each, and identify the essential resource requirements, the processes or activities which happen as part of the component, and the component objectives.
3. Complete a finer level analysis of each component (i.e., break it into subcomponents). Ensure that every function of the component is subsumed into one

of the sub-components.

4. Check the comprehensiveness and logical organization of the design. Does it represent the intended operation of the program? Are all activities of the program described? Are all of the objectives of the program stated as outcomes?

Note: Ensure that each component is in fact a function. A function is a process that produces outputs and consumes inputs.

—Carolyn Callahan, 1992

Program evaluation is always taking place on some level. It may be by the parents in the stands during the basketball game, by the teachers in the lounge during lunch, or by the students after they have been asked to make up work they missed while being out of the room. These are areas of concern which usually focus on one small part of a program and need to be addressed on an ongoing basis.

It is not possible to evaluate that which you cannot describe.
—Carolyn Callahan

A summative evaluation, such as we are addressing, should be completed every 4-5 years or when any great change occurs. Often an outside evaluator is invited to conduct the evaluation but the Steering Committee may accomplish the task. It must be noted that this is an intense activity demanding a high degree of academic rigor and support through resources of both time and money.

The following recommendations by David M. Fetterman and the National Research Center of the Gifted and Talented may be helpful. Make sure that the:

√ evaluation serves the practical information needed by the targeted audiences,

√ evaluation is realistic(politically and pragmatically) and cost-effective,

√ evaluation is conducted in an ethical manner,

√ evaluation is as accurate as possible,

√ program documentation exists,

√ review covers as many relevant data sources as possible,

√ evaluation compares the program's stated goals with the actual performance,

√ evaluation describes and assesses the climate,

√ evaluation includes talking to students,

√ program finances are reviewed, and

√ community and school board components are included in the evaluation.

The process of program development and renewal is an ongoing cycle involving the community and its resources. The best program is built by dedicated and concerned individuals working as a team to educate our students by integrating the best methods from the past, present and future. This is dedication for continuous improvement.

For information, analysis and evaluation of instruments used in the identification of gifted students or in the evaluation of gifted programs contact:

The National Research Center on the Gifted and Talented
Data Base Requests
Curry School of Education
405 Emmet Street
University of Virginia
Charlottesville, VA 22903
TEL (804)982-2849

An evaluator is best regarded not as a judge or a referee but as "an educator (whose) success is to be judged by what others learn" —Cronbach, in Borland, 1989, p.200

Borland, James H., Planning and Implementing Programs for the Gifted, Teachers College Press, 1989, pp.195-219

Callahan, Carolyn; Evaluations Lectures, Project EDGE, Montana OPI, 1992 (available on videotape)

Criteria for Excellent Programs for Highly Capable Students: A Gifted and Talented Students' Program Guide, Montana Office of Public Instruction, 1994

Program Assessment: a Six-Step Process to Curriculum Improvement, Montana Office of Public Instruction, 1990

10.55.804 GIFTED AND TALENTED

(1) Schools shall provide educational services to gifted and talented students that are commensurate to their needs, and foster a positive self-image.

(2) Each school shall comply with all federal and state laws and regulations addressing gifted education.

(3) Each school shall provide structured support and assistance to teachers identifying and meeting diverse student needs, and shall provide a framework* for considering a full range of alternatives for addressing student needs. (History: Sec. 20-2-114, MCA; IMP, Sec. 20-2-121, MCA; NEW, 1989 MAR p. 342, Eff. 7/1/89; AMD, 2000 MAR p. 3340, Eff. 12/8/00.)

*Refer to Montana School Accreditation Standards and Procedures Manual Glossary

GLOSSARY REFERENCE: Framework for Gifted and Talented Education Services

GIFTED AND TALENTED: Schools shall provide educational services to students commensurate to their needs. It is recommended that such services shall be outlined in framework which includes:

(a) Identification of talent areas and student selection criteria according to a written program philosophy;

(b) A curriculum which reflects student needs;

(c) Teacher preparation;

(d) Criteria for formative and summative evaluation;

(e) Supportive services; and

(d) Parent involvement.

20-7-901. Definitions. As used in this part the following definitions apply:

(1) "Gifted and talented children" means children of outstanding abilities who are capable of high performance and require differentiated educational programs beyond those normally offered in public schools in order to fully achieve their potential contribution to self and society. The children so identified include those with demonstrated achievement or potential ability in a variety of worthwhile human endeavors.

(2) "Professionally qualified persons" means teachers, administrators, school psychologists, counselors, curriculum specialists, artists, musicians, and others with special training who are qualified to appraise pupils' special competencies.

20-7-902. School district programs to identify and serve the gifted and talented child.

(1) A school district may identify gifted and talented children and devise programs to serve them.

(2) In identifying gifted and talented children, the school district shall:

  (a) consult with professionally qualified persons and the parents of children being evaluated;

  (b) consider a child's demonstrated or potential gifts or talents; and

  (c) use comprehensive and appropriate assessment methods including objective measures and professional assessment measures.

20-7-903. Programs to serve gifted and talented children-compliance with board policy-funding.

(1) The conduct of programs to serve gifted and talented children must comply with the policies recommended by the superintendent of public instruction and adopted by the board of public education.

(2) Proposals approved by the superintendent of public instruction in accordance with policies of the board of public education must be funded by money appropriated to the superintendent for that purpose.

(3) A school district shall match funds provided by the superintendent for gifted and talented children's program with equal funds from other sources. "In kind" contributions may note be used to constitute such a match. Funds must be administered by the school district as provided in 20-9-507.

(4) The superintendent of public instruction may deduct reasonable costs of administration from the funds appropriated for the purpose of this part.

20-7-904. Review and recommendations or proposals.

(1) The policies of the board of public education must assure that program proposals submitted by school districts to the superintendent of public instruction contain:

  (a) evidence that identification procedures are comprehensive and appropriate;

  (b) a program description including stated needs and measurable objectives designed to meet those needs;

  (c) evidence that the activities are appropriate and will serve to achieve the program objectives; and

  (d) a method to evaluate the effectiveness of the program.

(2) School districts may request assistance from the staff of the superintendent in formulating program proposals.

(3) The superintendent of public instruction shall supervise and coordinate the programs for gifted and talented children by:

  (a) recommending to the board of public education the adoption of those policies necessary to establish a planned and coordinated program; and

  (b) establishing a procedure for review and approval of program proposals.

Appendix B

Great Falls Public Schools

The following needs assessment questions were cooperatively developed by parents, students and administrators with the assistance of Dr. Carolyn Callahan from the University of Virginia. The questions primarily asked the rater to rate each question on a "Disagree," "Don't Know," "Agree" scale. The results were tabulated and formed the basis of the program revision that is currently operating in the district. Over 1,200 surveys were completed.

Parent, Teacher, Administrator and Counselor Responses

Issues Related to Who are the Gifted

Gifted students are above average in all academic areas.

Gifted students can be gifted in one subject area only.

The gifted program should serve those with high intellectual ability only.

The gifted program should serve those who are highly creative.

The gifted program should serve those who are gifted in specific academic areas.

The gifted program should serve those who are gifted in visual and performing arts.

The percentage of the student population which should be identified and served by the gifted program is _____.

The number of students identified and served as gifted should be as large as possible.

The gifted and talented program should serve only students who are identified as gifted.

Students who are highly creative but not above average academically are gifted.

Gifted students are usually leaders.

When asked to rank order which group should be served first, second, etc., given the reality of limited funds, the following choices were made:

Those with high intellectual ability.

Those who are highly creative.

Those who are underachievers.

Those gifted in visual and performing arts.

Those gifted in a specific academic area.

Those who are motivated and productive.

Issues Related to Programming

Gifted students should be allowed to progress through the classroom subjects at a faster rate.

Gifted students should study the same subjects as other students but in greater depth.

Gifted students should be provided with opportunities to pursue a self-selected topic in depth.

Gifted students should be involved with the community through mentorships, onsite visits, interviews, etc.

Gifted students should develop higher-level thinking processes that are beyond those used in the regular curriculum.

The gifted program should be designed to meet the social and emotional needs of gifted children.

Gifted students need the chance to interact with each other on a regular basis.

Gifted students require more, rather than less, individual attention from teachers.

The gifted program specialist should work with the classroom teacher to provide for the individual needs of the gifted students in the regular classroom.

Classroom teachers should provide for independent learning by the gifted students in their classroom.

Regular classroom teachers should heed the needs of gifted students who are placed in their classrooms.

Most regular classroom teachers are familiar with the instructional strategies that are best suited to gifted children.

Teachers of the gifted provide their students with enough appropriately different instruction in the gifted classes.

Honors courses and advanced placement courses at the high school level provide appropriately challenging curriculum for gifted students.

Classroom teachers have adequate resources (books, materials, etc.) to meet the needs of the gifted children in their classes.

Most teachers in this school provide appropriately different instruction for gifted students in their classes.

Sufficient program opportunities exist for gifted education students at the K-3 grade levels.

Sufficient program opportunities exist for gifted education students at the 4-5 grade levels.

Sufficient program opportunities exist for gifted education students at the 6-8 grade levels.

Sufficient program opportunities exist for gifted education students at the 9-12 grade levels.

The current district program is meeting the needs of students who have special talents in art.

The current district program is meeting the needs of students who have special talents in music.

The current district program is meeting the needs of students who have special talents in drama.

Gifted children should be allowed to skip a grade.

Gifted students should be allowed early entry into kindergarten or first grade.

Selected middle school students should be permitted to take high school classes for credit.

Gifted students should be allowed to test out of a course at the high school level and receive credit.

Preassessments should be used consistently for the purpose of providing appropriately differentiated instruction for gifted students.

Providing appropriately different curriculum for gifted students within the regular classroom takes up too much of the regular classroom teacher's time.

Programming options for gifted students should include the use of IEPs (individual education plans).

Programming options for gifted students should include the use of annual reviews.

Appendix C

Responses

When asked to rank service delivery options according to how you believe gifted children would best be served at your school, the following responses were obtained:

All instruction in the regular classroom.

Part of instruction in the regular classroom; part in separate classroom for gifted students.

All instruction in a separate classroom for gifted students.

Magnet school (centralized school for gifted).

Student Responses—PACE/Enrichment

The activities in my gifted education class are challenging to me.

The activities in the regular classroom are challenging to me.

I benefit from being in the gifted program.

Sometimes being in the gifted program makes it harder to get along with my classmates.

I would like to work with other gifted students for a greater amount of time each week.

Making up class work that I missed while I was away at PACE or enrichment improves my understanding of the subject.

A few other students in my class also should be in PACE.

If I were offered the opportunity to skip a grade, I would want to.

I would like the opportunity to work on a project with an interested adult from the community.

Student Responses—Advanced Placement/Honors

The activities in my AP/Honors classes are challenging to me.

Additional AP/Honors courses should be offered.

Things I study in AP/Honors courses are new to me.

The content in regular classes is as challenging as that in AP/Honors classes.

Students should be able to take AP/Honors courses whenever they are ready to handle the content, regardless of the grade level.

Students should be allowed to test out of a course and receive full credit.

Independent study should be available to students who qualify.

Were you in the PACE program in either elementary or middle school?

For further information, contact the Great Falls Gifted and Talented Education Program.

Academically GiftedAccelerationAdvanced PlacementCluster GroupingCompacting-Comprehensive District PlanConcurrent EnrollmentDistance LearningEarly Entrance to KindergartenEnrichmentGrade SkippingHonors ClassesIndependent StudyIntellectually GiftedMentorshipsMultiple CriteriaResource Room/Pull-Out/Send-OutRegular Classroom PlanSelf-Contained Classes

Appendix E

Brief Hints for Proposal Writers

Kathleen Mollohan
State Gifted and Talented Program
Educational Opportunity and Equity Division
Montana Office of Public Instruction
Linda McCulloch, Superintendent
December 2001

Writing proposals for funding is not really difficult. Your challenge is to communicate your good ideas to others.

These brief hints may help you get over some of the hurdles as you write your proposal. They are based on the most crucial elements of any proposal: determining and proving a need, writing measurable objectives, and evaluating the effectiveness of the project.

PLANNING

Any proposal for funding, whether for a single activity or a multi-faceted project, must be based on a clear plan of action. If the plan is well conceived, the proposal will be easy to write.

When planning, ask yourself:

1. What is the problem or need I wish to address?
2. What do I want to accomplish?
3. What steps must be taken, by whom, and when?
4. How much will the project cost?
5. How will I know if the project was successful?

Those questions form the outline of the proposal, and the answers supply the content. The content is composed of basic elements, usually identified as:

1. Statement of need
2. Goals and objectives
3. Activities
4. Budget
5. Evaluation plan

DETERMINING NEED

A proposal for funding must be a response to a need. Usually it is a need for change from one condition to a better condition. ***Even if the proposal does not call for you to state your needs, you must define them for yourself as the basis for creating your objectives.*** The statement of need should include a description of the problem and documentation that the problem exists. Documentation should consist of statistical evidence or a review of the literature on the topic.

> SAMPLE NEEDS STATEMENT: "A self-assessment of teacher confidence in meeting the needs of students was conducted in the district this year. While the district used multiple criteria for identifying gifted students, teachers reported that they were unsure

of all the ways to measure these students' current level of achievement and, thus, were not confident they were providing the appropriate instructional programs to meet the educational needs of individual students. The district's priority of providing an appropriate education to all students was not being met. The district proposes to improve its gifted student needs assessment and instruction by sending a gifted and talented team to an intensive training institute on this topic."

As you will see later, the district's objective is not to train teachers. That is just the strategy. Their objective is to ensure gifted students' needs are being met.

WRITING MEASURABLE OBJECTIVES

Although you may have a clear idea what will happen during the project period, it may be difficult to state your objectives. The objective must indicate the outcome expected as a solution to the defined need or problem. An objective must also state your criteria for success, which simply means it states how much and what kind of change or improvement you expect the project to produce.

In the sample above, the problem is that teachers feel they are not able to determine the actual needs of gifted students in order to provide the appropriate instruction. The measurable objective would try to reverse that situation. The essential part of your measurable objective could be stated like this:

> ". . . gifted students will receive appropriate instruction based on a determination of their academic needs . . ."

To be convincing you also need to show your need, your criteria for success, and your basic strategy. A well-written objective also states the method of testing or measuring the outcome.

Say, for example, your district has decided it would be reasonable to expect that 95 percent of the gifted students will receive a more appropriate education than they were currently receiving (your criteria for success). Now you must decide what you will need to do to make this change. Based on current and anticipated resources, research, best practice, policy, legal requirements and other factors, you determine a strategy to accomplish your objective. Your strategy could be intensive professional development which focuses on 1) methods of testing for current achievement levels, 2) methods of assessment to determine academic need, and 3) teaching strategies for meeting individual student needs. Let's see if we can state the objective with what we have so far:

> *"A 1999 districtwide teacher self-assessment revealed that gifted teachers lacked confidence that they were meeting the needs of individual gifted students. The district's objective is to make sure that at least 95 percent of identified gifted students are receiving an appropriate instruction based on a determination of their academic needs. The district's strategy for meeting this objective is for three members of the gifted and talented team to attend a highly regarded gifted education teacher training institute in order to learn 1) the best methods of testing for current achievement levels, 2) methods of assessment to determine academic need, and 3) teaching strategies for meeting individual student needs.*
>
> *Measures of the success of this approach will include:*
>
> 1. *student academic advancement as measured by teacher-made and portfolio assessments.*
> 2. *student and parent questionnaires which reveal satisfaction with adjustments*

to the instructional program, and

3. *teacher follow-up self-assessment which reveals confidence in providing appropriate instruction."*

Now you have stated your need, measurable objective, criterion for success, the strategy for accomplishing your objective, and a way to evaluate whether or not you were successful.

WHAT GOES WRONG?

A common mistake in writing an objective is to refer to an activity instead of the desired outcome.

> SAMPLE POOR OBJECTIVE: The objective of this proposal is to establish a parent newsletter so that the parents of gifted students are routinely and frequently involved in their child's education.

Why is this a poor objective? Remember, objectives are specific and state the expected results in measurable terms. Although you can "measure" whether or not you established a newsletter, grantors are more interested in the extent to which parents are actually involved in their child's education, and whether or not the child's school experience is better because of that involvement. Remember, too, that the grantors look for the validity and quality of what you are doing. They may point out that sending out a newsletter, while having the potential to inform parents, is not necessarily a good vehicle to solicit their actual involvement.

Objectives should be specific, answering the questions WHO? WHAT? WHEN? and HOW MUCH?

> Who will benefit from the project?
> What should occur?
> When will the change happen?
> How much change must occur to prove the project's success?

Avoid vague and unmeasurable words in writing objectives. The following words and phrases practically guarantee objectives that will cause problems:

appreciate	enjoy	be aware of	realize	expose to

Another pitfall in writing objectives is to begin with phrases such as:

to provide	to work with
to impart to	to develop
to instill in	to enhance

If you complete each of the above phrases, you will end up not with a measurable objective, but an activity that is only a step toward your true objective. You can put the objective to the test by asking, "Why bother?" The answer to that question is probably the basis of your true objective.

By far the most common complaint about proposal objectives is that the applicant does not distinguish between what is to be accomplished (the objective) and what activities will take place (the strategies to reach the objective).

To turn the poor objective in the above sample into a true measurable objective, you might state it this way:

> *"Research shows that parent involvement is an important factor in the child's successful school experience. The objective of this proposal is to more closely align instruction to students' needs by increasing meaningful involvement of those students' parents. As a result of a multi-faceted district strategy of routinely and frequently involving parents in their child's instructional program, at least 50 percent of these students and their parents will report improved school experiences.*
>
> *The strategy will include:*
>
> 1. *a regular newsletter to provide general information about the gifted program,*
> 2. *regularly scheduled parent/teacher meetings to plan and review the student's instructional program,*
> 3. *a structured process for reporting student progress and making program adjustments, and*
> 4. *a plan to use parent volunteers in activities and projects.*
>
> *This approach will be deemed successful if parents and students report satisfaction with the instructional program, as measured by a student and parent questionnaire administered during the first month of the project period, and again at the end of the project period."*

This objective clearly states a desired outcome. I shows what will be done, when it will be done, and how it will be measured. ***How it will be measured IS the evaluation scheme!***

EVALUATION

Ideally, a project's evaluation scheme will be build into the project design: you know in advance what you want to accomplish and what constitutes success. Well-written objectives do this for you. You are in the best position to decide how to test or measure the degree and quality of the change you anticipate. That is the essence of evaluation, whether the evaluation design is simple or complex. A proposal may have an evaluation scheme that sounds sophisticated but, because the objectives are not measurable, is meaningless.

By definition, evaluation cannot be applied after the fact. If you know the results you want, you must have some idea in the beginning how you will be able to tell if you were successful. That is why writing measurable objectives is so important. A well-written objective states the criteria for success and states the method of testing or measuring.
In assessing the effectiveness of your program, you are usually asked for your formative and summative evaluation strategy. Don't panic, and don't run off and copy someone else's important-sounding document. Certainly, you should study guides that help you determine what you should measure and how you can collect the data, but essentially it boils down to this:

> FORMATIVE EVALUATION means you continually assess whether your strategy is working the way you want it to, and

SUMMATIVE EVALUATION means you look at whether, in the end, your project did what you set out to do.

SUMMARY

In summary, the grantor wants to know how effective the project is likely to be. The grantor can estimate the value of the project if:

- it is designed to meet a need or solve a problem,
- the technique used has a good chance of bringing about the desired change,
- the quality and quantity of the change can be measured, and
- the results can be documented.